

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRINIDAD CITY COUNCIL
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2009

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

- Mayor Binnie called the meeting to order at 7:00PM. Council members in attendance: Bhardwaj, Binnie, Fulkerson, Ratzlaff. **Morgan – Absent.**
- City Staff in attendance: City Manager Steve Albright, City Clerk Gabriel Adams, and City Attorney Paul Hagen, Police Chief Ken Thrailkill.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ADJOURNMENT TO CLOSED SESSION

Conference with legal Council – Anticipated Litigation
Significant exposure litigation pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section 54956.9.b.3(c)

IV. RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION

No report from closed session.

V. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

*Motion (Fulkerson/Bhardwaj) to approve the agenda as amended. **Passed unanimously.***

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

July 02, 2009 scc

*Motion (Bhardwaj/Fulkerson) to approve the minutes as submitted. **Passed unanimously.***

July 08, 2009 cc

Continued to a future meeting pending corrections.

VII. COMMISSIONERS REPORTS

Binnie:

- **HCAOG:** Approved the Regional Housing Needs Plan and the Unmet Transit Needs reports.

Bhardwaj:

- **Planning Commission:** Update on the General Plan progress – Land Use Conservation Element.
- **League of CA:** Attended the most recent, regional meeting. The League surveyed public perception towards government, and found that local governments were more trusted than State or Federal.

Fulkerson:

- **RREDC:** Announced the new director, Greg Foster.
- **Wave Energy:** Invited to join the Wave Energy Commission.

Ratzlaff:

- **RCEA:** Reported on the most recent meeting, and requested that the Council consider submitting an application to RCEA to insulate the Town Hall ceiling.

VIII. STAFF REPORTS

City Manager - Albright: Summarized staff activities report, and reminded the Council that a second meeting will be held on August 26 to discuss planning related projects.

Police Chief – Thrailkill: Salmon season opens August 29, and the Police Department will be staffed in full-force. Drinking and driving may be a serious problem, and officers will be staffed from 5am-midnight throughout the week.

City Clerk – Gabriel Adams: Nothing to report.

IX. ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR

(Three (3) minute limit per Speaker unless Council approves request for extended time.)

Richard Johnson – Trinidad Area

Urged the Council to engage with appropriate airport authorities with regards to future runway expansion and potential impacts quality of life in Trinidad.

Patti Fleschner – Trinidad

Announced that the grand opening for the Trinidad Museum is scheduled for Saturday, September 26, 2009 at 2:00pm. City Council and Staff are encouraged to attend.

Glenn Saunders – Trinidad

Who's in charge of the water department these days, and why aren't we getting regular reports?

Janinie Volkmar - Westhaven

Requested that the City consider a proclamation thanking Ned Simmons for his coordination of the Cock-Eyed Florence Parade for almost 20 years. This year will be his last parade.

X. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Staff Activities Report through July, 2009
2. Financial Status Reports for June, 2009
3. Set Public Hearing for September 9, 2009 for FY2010 Budget Amendment
4. Resolution 2009-13 Submitting a Grant Application for ARRA. Energy Efficiency Funds
5. Approve Professional Services Agreement with Freeman Architects
Motion (Bhardwaj/Fulkerson) to approve the professional services agreement with Freeman Architects, and instruct them to include a site for public art and/or the whale sculpture. Passed 4-0.

- Move no.5 to discussion agenda.
- Pull no.4 from the discussion agenda until further notice.

Motion (Fulkerson/Bhardwaj) to approve the consent agenda as amended. Passed 4-0.

XI. AGENDA ITEMS

1. Report on Recycling Status in Trinidad.
City Clerk Gabriel Adams explained that in June, the Council members received a letter from local citizens regarding possible expansion of Trinidad's recycling efforts. Specifically, the letter suggested that there be an improved effort to recycle additional refuse products. Staff contacted area experts to begin to assess what could be done and at what cost to the City.

City Clerk Adams introduced Jim Test from Humboldt Waste Management Authority, and Greg Cain, Brian Sollom, and Ken Eisner from Humboldt Sanitation.

Jim Test – HWMA

Test began by explaining the CIWMB's new methodology for identifying each jurisdictions diversion status, and announced that Eureka and Arcata are converting to mandatory garbage & recycling services to help reach mandated diversion goals. He also noted that Trinidad will likely be the last drop-off station in the county within a year because other cities will discontinue funding the stations.

Greg Cain - Humboldt Sanitation

Humboldt Sanitation has been a part of Trinidad for over 50 years. Ran by 3 locally owned families within that period. Cain's family owned it since 1978. Humboldt Recycling started in 1989. Trinidad Civic Club requested the first recycling center in Trinidad, and the funds received from the buy-back program went back to the Club.

Brian Sollom – Operations Manager

Trinidad Recycling collects more tonnage than garbage. In the past, greenwaste recycling weekends and other special collection events have been organized to help the city reach State mandates. Space is limited at the Park & Ride for additional material collection. Magazines and catalogs CAN be dropped in the newspaper

container at the drop-off site. Tonnage at this facility is over 145 tons/year. The City currently collects cardboard, metal, aluminum, newspaper, plastics 1&2, and glass at the drop-off site. Plastics #3-7 at the Arcata Community Recycling Center are paid for by government subsidies. The material buyers are encouraging HumSan to landfill it because there is zero-negative return for the material at this time. Trinidad made \$20,658 off the material last year, and paid \$12,480 to HumSan to haul it. The post office recently began sorting their paper waste, and HumSan provides the hauling service.

Council comments:

Fulkerson: We should be working towards a more county-wide recycling coordination effort.

Test explained that there is no coordination from the county. Every community has their own program. Bundled services are offered in Southern Humboldt, Eureka & Arcata are moving to automated, mandatory recycling/garbage service. Trinidad, however, isn't large enough to support such programs. Whatever facility is made available to the city, will be used by the surrounding community. **Sollom** added that there are only 68 residential garbage customers and 13 commercial customers within the City limits.

Binnie: Where does our garbage go? This is something people should know. **Sollom** explained that all of Humboldt County's garbage is exported out of Redding.

Bhardwaj: What is the current recycling market like? Sollom explained that he's worked in the industry since 1985, and never experienced such a serious decline in commodities. The market is extremely poor. The supply is high, but there is no demand.

Public comment included:

John Speaker – Trinidad Area Resident

Having an organized recycling plan for Trinidad should be a priority.

Carol Mone – Trinidad Area Resident

The City should consider source reduction, along with recycling.

Janine Volkmar – Trinidad Area Resident

Thanked HumSan for supporting the McKinleyville Senior Center through the proceeds generated by their recycling center. They will charge less if you have a smaller can at the curb, and have a friendly singing garbage collector. Signage should be placed on the newspaper bin notifying users that magazines are ok to be disposed there.

Greg Cain – Humboldt Sanitation

HumSan's goal is to provide automated garbage collection & recycling within the next 3 years.

No motion was made. By consensus, the Council directed the City Clerk to draft a custom, comprehensive "where to recycle" list for Trinidad.

2. Presentation from the Humboldt County Dementia Care Coalition

City Manager Albright explained that Council members and staff have received a request by the Dementia Care Coalition of Humboldt County to report on the plans, actions, and accomplishments of the organization. Albright introduced Rachel Turner from the Coalition. Turner explained that the members of the Coalition have been preparing a Dementia Care Plan for the area, and she presented a brief overview to the Council.

Motion (Fulkerson/Bhardwaj) to endorse the letter of support for the Dementia Care Coalition and sign the letter upon arrival. Passed unanimously.

3. Recommendation for Amendments to the City's Water Rates Structure.

City Manager Albright explained that at each of the last several meetings the Council has received considerable information and has discussed options for changing the current structure of water rates in Trinidad. The Council has generally agreed that this is being done with four stated objectives:

- Promote water conservation;
- Address the issue of customers outside the City limits paying 50% higher rates;
- Raise sufficient revenue to fund the ongoing operations and maintenance of the water system (fixed costs); and
- Raise some amount of annual revenue beyond the yearly fixed costs to increase the fund reserve.

Multiple alternatives have been discussed to date, and at the last meeting the Council was provided with one example of a rate structure that could address the objectives. That rate structure is as follows:

- Base rate of \$24.00/month;
- First 200 Cubic Feet (CF) of water consumed \$3.00/100CF;
Second 200CF of water consumed \$3.50/100CF;
400-1,000CF of water consumed at \$4.00/100CF;
1,000-4,000CF of water consumed at \$4.50/100CF; and
Greater than 4,000CF at \$5.00/100CF.
- Residences with a second unit on the same lot using one water meter to be charged two basic rates per month (\$48.00), plus consumption;
- Customers outside the city limits to pay 25% higher on all stated costs (i.e., \$30.00/month base rate); and
- No changes to the current hook-up fees for new customers.

The Council requested that staff apply this proposed rate structure to ALL customers to determine the affect on the users based on their water consumption. That report could not be generated by the current software billing system and would need to be done by hand (looking at each individual account for 12 months). As a result, this information is not available.

The new rate structure, as now proposed, would address the Councils objective in the following way:

- 1) It would promote conservation for requiring the customers to pay for all water used, and higher volume users would pay more per unit of consumption as more water is used;
- 2) It would reduce the surcharge for outside-city-limit users from 50% higher to 25% higher rates;
- 3) It would result in a slightly higher level of revenue based on current usage levels by consumers; and
- 4) If increased revenues are realized, reserves of the Water Department could be increased slowly over time.

Finally, any change to the structured rates may need to be approved by the voters in conjunction with CA State Proposition 218, approved by the voters in 1994. The Council requested the City Attorney to provide an analysis of this requirement, and that is included with Agenda item IX.3.

Public comment included:

Lore Snell – Trinidad

The School's water bill, as proposed, will double. The rate they pay should be reconsidered.

Richard Johnson – Trinidad Area Resident

The City should lead by example and reduce its use. Has there been any conservation incentives considered – or introduced?

Chi-Wei Lin – Trinidad

There are projects we can afford, and there are those we cannot. New water storage tank – YES, perhaps with a low interest loan. New distribution system costing over 10 million – NO. Grants will have to supplement larger projects such as those. However, we should be sure to factor into the rate structure enough revenue to develop a reserve. According to the draft rates, if we discount the school there will be no reserve.

Council comments included:

Fulkerson: The math should be checked, and double-checked before we seriously consider a final draft rate.

Motion (Bhardwaj/Fulkerson) to conduct a public hearing in November to discuss the new proposed water rates. Passed unanimously.

4. Report on the Placement of New Trail Identification Signs
Pulled from the agenda.

5. Report on FY2010 Budget Amendment
City Manager Albright explained that the City Council adopted the FY2010 Budget by resolution at the June meeting. At that time, Council members requested staff analysis of a number of potential budget additions in the form of special projects, studies or analyses, and other unprogrammed expenditures. Since that time, there have been other factors that necessitate consideration by the Council of increased or decreased expenditures and changes to the projected revenue. Albright further explained that even with this budget amendment, there will be other changes that may be appropriate during the year. Staff will bring forward additional changes to the budget during the year as they are warranted

By consensus, the Council agreed to schedule a public hearing in September for the budget amendment.
Passed unanimously.

XII. COUNCIL REQUEST FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

- Meeting ended at 9:50pm.

Submitted by:

Approved by:

Gabriel Adams
City Clerk

Stan Binnie
Mayor